

REMARKS

Claims 17-25 have been examined. New claims 26 and 27 are added via this Amendment. Claim 24 is cancelled.

As a preliminary matter, the undersigned thanks Examiner Kim for the courtesies extended during the interview of December 2, 2003. In accordance with the requirements regarding submission of the substance of the interview, Applicants submit the following remarks which reflect positions presented during the interview.

35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 17, 19-21, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Yabe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,004,039 [hereinafter “Yabe”]). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the following remarks.

Element 3 of Yabe is applied against the recited nut member. During the interview, it was pointed out to the Examiner that Yabe does not disclose a nut member that is threadably engaging an outer periphery of a screw shaft. This is because the shaft S, as discussed, is not disclosed as having threads to permit the nut member to be threadably engaged therewith. At the time of the interview, the Examiner did not rebut this submission, and requested that it be made in writing when responding to the Office Action. Accordingly, Applicants submit that each feature recited in claim 17 is not disclosed by Yabe, as required by 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), and requests that the rejection of claim 17 be withdrawn. Likewise, the rejection of dependent claims 19-21 and 23 should also be withdrawn at least by virtue of these claims depending upon claim 17.

35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 17, 18 and 20-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nilsson (U.S. Patent No. 3,532,004) in view of Masutani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,401,574 [hereinafter “Masutani”]) and in view of Sugihara et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,695,288 [hereinafter “Sugihara”]). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the following remarks.

During the interview, it was submitted that the features contained in claim 24 regarding the retaining ring as being fastened to a circumferential end face of the nut member would not have been taught or suggested by the applied references. In response, the Examiner asserted that his interpretation of “circumferential end face” is broad enough to include an outer boundary, but does not necessarily require that the face be on an “outside” of the nut member. Claim 17 is amended to include the features of claim 24, while further reciting the retaining ring as being fastened to an “outside” circumferential end face of the nut member.

An illustrative, non-limiting embodiment of this feature can be found in Figure 19 that shows element 108 as being fastened by screws 111 on an outer circumferential end face of the nut member 2. As noted during the interview, the Examiner agreed that including the term “outside” should define over the applied art. The element applied by the Examiner against the claimed retaining ring is not fastened to such an outside circumferential end face of a nut member. Instead, the alleged retaining ring of Nilsson, is disposed inside and enclosed by the nut member, thus, not teaching or suggesting the features of amended claim 17.

Accordingly, one skilled in the art would not have been taught or suggested the claimed features regarding, *inter alia*, the physical disposition of the retaining ring in light of the

teachings in Nilsson. Further, the teachings of Masutani and Sugihara also would have failed to teach or suggest this feature. The rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is requested to be withdrawn. The rejection of dependent claims 18 and 20-23 should also be withdrawn at least by virtue of them depending upon claim 17.

Claims 19 and 25

Claims 19 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nilsson in view of Masutani, in view of Sugihara and further in view of Spontelli (U.S. Patent No. 2,818,745). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the following remarks.

Spontelli is relied on for an alleged wiper assembly. Applicants respectfully submit that this disclosure fails to make up for the deficient teachings of Nilsson, Masutani and Sugihara in regard to the features recited in claim 17. Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 19 and 25 are patentable over the applied references at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 17. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

NEW CLAIMS:

Applicants add new claims 26 and 27 to obtain more varied protection for the invention. New claim 26 describes the retaining ring as being disk-shaped. As noted during the interview, the undersigned submitted that such a feature is not taught by, for example, element 22 of Yabe. Moreover, claim 27 further defines the projection of claim 17 as being a tab formed from an outwardly bent portion of the retaining ring. This is also a novel and unobvious feature which provides benefits not found in the prior art. In particular, as one is taught from reading the specification, such a projection can be effectively manufactured and result in lower cost.

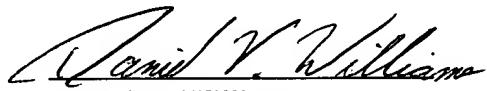
Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No.: 09/809,262

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In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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